

# Archived Information

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## Goal 1. Build a solid foundation for learning for all children.

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To foster the movement toward world-class student academic performance, our reform efforts focus on four main objectives that address different stages of student development.

**Objective 1A: All children enter school ready to learn through receiving high-quality educational and developmentally appropriate preschool experiences.** We must support children's early development and education, including support for optimal early cognitive development, so they are ready to learn when they begin formal schooling in kindergarten and beyond.

**Objective 1B: Every child reads well and independently by the end of the third grade.** Children need to be able to read independently and effectively in order to be able to apply reading to learning other subjects.

**Objective 1C: Every eighth-grader masters challenging mathematics, including the foundations of algebra and geometry.** Acquiring basic mathematics skills and knowledge by the eighth grade prepares students for more advanced work and is critical to student success in high school and beyond. In mathematics, the latest results from the Third International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) affirm that poor U.S. performance in the eighth grade is linked to mediocre content, lack of instructional rigor, and inadequate training and support for quality teaching. We must implement all recommendations of the Glenn Commission to strengthen the teaching of mathematics.

**Objective 1D: Middle schools and secondary schools help all students make successful transitions to college and careers.** We must be sure that secondary school students get the information, skills, and support they need to prepare successfully for postsecondary education and careers. Students need to be able to clearly express their ideas, orally and in writing; apply new information technology to education and, later, to work; and attain fluency in more than one language and culture in an increasingly global arena in which U.S. students are competing with those around the world.

American schools must meet these aims for all our students. We must address the diverse needs of the student population in order that all students—including limited English proficient students, students with disabilities, migrant students, students in high-poverty schools, and any students at risk of not acquiring the knowledge and skills required to achieve high state standards—receive the support and encouragement they need to succeed.

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## Objective 1A: All children enter school ready to learn through receiving high-quality educational and developmentally appropriate preschool experiences.

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Children's early childhood experiences are critical to building a solid learning foundation. Research on early brain development reveals that children who have high-quality early learning experiences, including a language- and literacy-rich environment, are more likely to be successful learners when they are older and are less likely to have difficulty learning to read. High-quality early childhood programs are particularly important for children from families with limited education and for children with disabilities.

Preschool participation is increasing for poor children, however poor children are still less likely to participate in preschool programs than higher income children. According to the National Household Education Survey, participation rates for children from poverty-level families increased from 44 percent in 1993 and 1996 to 52 percent in 1999. Non-poor children had higher rates of participation; in 1999, the respective rates of participation were 52 percent for poor children and 62 percent for non-poor children. Many children from low-income or less educated families also start kindergarten with a learning gap. For example, 20 percent of the kindergarten children whose mothers had only a high school diploma were proficient in recognizing beginning sounds compared with 50 percent of the children whose mothers had at least a bachelor's degree (NCES: *America's Kindergartners*, Early Childhood Longitudinal Study, 2000). Similar disparities exist for Hispanic preschoolers. Once children enter school behind, they usually fail to catch up in later grades without intensive interventions (Planning and Evaluation Service: PROSPECTS, 1994).

Challenges to improving early childhood education include low teacher pay and a lack of high-quality professional development, which make it difficult to hire and retain teachers who are well-trained in early learning and development. Other challenges include the lack of equity and access to high-quality early childhood services for low-income families, students from Hispanic and other non-English speaking homes, and children from Native American communities.

### Performance Indicators and Targets

1. *By 2005, preschool participation rates for low-income children will rise to 60 percent.*
2. *By 2005, increasing proportions of low-income children who complete federally supported preschool programs, will enter school prepared to learn as measured by appropriate assessments of literacy and math competencies (in coordination with the Department of Health and Human Services through FACES, a longitudinal study of Head Start) extended to Title I, ESEA, and Even Start.*
3. *By 2005, at least half the states will have enacted program quality standards for early childhood education programs, and curriculum content guidelines consistent with scientific understanding of children's early learning and special education including of non-English speaking students.*

### Our Role

The Federal role in early childhood education consists of providing funding, guidance and technical assistance for Federal programs that support quality early-childhood education services; conducting and disseminating research on early childhood development and learning; and measuring progress of young

children, including children participating in Federal programs, on achieving the national goal of ready-to-learn.

The U.S. Department of Education provides funding and guidance to support quality programs that serve disadvantaged young children and children with disabilities and their families, such as Even Start, preschool programs supported by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), IDEA Grants for Infants and Toddlers, and preschool programs supported by Title I, Part A of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. Through the America Reads Challenge, the U.S. Department of Education disseminates research-based materials that support and encourage parents to read and talk to their children and engage in other daily activities to increase children's language development.

The U.S. Department of Education provides leadership in early childhood education by supporting and disseminating research-based knowledge of effective policies and practices. Recent information from research on brain development, early childhood education, and reading research, provides a sound basis from which to develop and disseminate informational products. The National Research Council's recent *Eager to Learn* report, partially funded by the U.S. Department of Education, provides information about the necessary components of high-quality programs, including highly qualified staff, small class sizes, and curriculum and pedagogical strategies that develop cognitive and emergent literacy skills in a developmentally appropriate manner. To help grantees plan, evaluate, and improve their programs, the U.S. Department of Education will develop a guide for local programs that identifies quality indicators based on these components.

A considerable amount of the Federal funding that supports programs for young children is provided by other agencies. The U.S. Department of Education is collaborating with other agencies, through the Federal Interagency Coordinating Council under IDEA, and with the Department of Health and Human Services, to coordinate early childhood education services and performance measures.

## Core Strategies

- **Work to help states and districts expand preschool services in cooperation with HHS and state educational agencies.**
  - Provide resources to state and local providers under Title I, Part A, and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) in order to support programs aimed at infants, toddlers, and preschool children with disabilities or those most at risk of developing disabling conditions.
  - Provide resources to states and local districts under Title I, Part A and Even Start to support the availability of language-appropriate, early childhood services including dual-immersion programs.
  - Encourage states and communities to expand their preschool efforts, including identifying opportunities for joint funding among states, the Department of Education, and the Department of Health and Human Services, and particularly coordination between Title I, Part A; Even Start Family Literacy Services; and Head Start.
- **Facilitate state and local implementation of research-based standards through information and assistance.**
  - Disseminate a self-assessment guide that supports continuous improvement in program quality and outcomes and addresses the unique issues of educating special education and language minority populations.
  - Work with states and early childhood research and stakeholder groups to agree on model standards and guidelines for program quality that are consistent with the research-based recommendations of the National Research Council report *Eager to Learn: Educating Our Preschoolers*.

- Strengthen monitoring and assistance in early childhood education programs for children with disabilities, with a focus on implementing effective practices and identifying areas in need of improvement.
- **Improve collaboration and coordination within the Department of Education and with other Federal and state agencies.**
  - Implement the recommendations of the Department of Education and the Department of Health and Human Services cross-agency taskforce for greater coordination of early childhood programs, services, and research.
  - Strengthen coordination with state educational agencies in providing guidance and improving program implementation and reporting.
  - Promote effective models that facilitate collaboration between the many programs at the local and state levels.
  - Develop common performance indicators for the Departments of Education and Health and Human Services for early childhood programs.
  - Supplement the Department of Health and Human Services' FACES study to provide measures for Title I and Even Start populations and to explore providing nationally representative information on school readiness.
- **Collaborate with the Department of Health and Human Services to improve the language, literacy, and reading competencies of young children in poverty by providing professional development programs that will increase early childhood educators' knowledge and skills needed to build the foundations required for later reading success, as described in *Preventing Reading Difficulties and Eager to Learn*.**
  - Support community-based partnerships among early childhood programs and organizations, public schools, and institutions of higher education that will offer early childhood teachers research-based, language- and literacy-focused professional development opportunities, particularly in high-need communities.
  - Promote high-quality, research-based professional development activities through the enactment and implementation of an Early Childhood Professional Development program.
- **Provide leadership through the development and dissemination of research-based knowledge.**
  - Develop a U.S. Department of Education research agenda that is consistent with the recommendations of the National Research Council report on research priorities in early childhood learning and development and coordinated with the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD), the National Science Foundation (NSF), and other Federal agencies.
  - Support research and evaluation that use rigorous methodologies, especially studies employing random assignment strategies, in order to identify the characteristics of programs that produce beneficial results, especially in the areas of family literacy and involvement, and for programs focusing on language minority children and children with disabilities.
  - Evaluate models of promising applications of technology to early childhood learning.
  - Provide ready access to up-to-date information on early childhood education, including through the Web.
  - Continue to support and widely disseminate the findings from the NCES Early Childhood Longitudinal Study.

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## Objective 1B: Every child reads well and independently by the end of the third grade.

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Reading is the foundation of all other skills essential for learning. The 1998 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) reports that only 62 percent of fourth-graders read at the basic level or higher. Although this shows some progress over the prior NAEP, especially for students in the highest poverty schools, continued improvements are essential.

The 1998 National Academy of Sciences report funded by the U.S. Department of Education on *Preventing Reading Difficulties* and the NICHD report *Teaching Children to Read* identify key strategies that research has shown to be effective in overcoming children's reading problems. However, far too many teachers of reading lack the fundamental knowledge and training in research-based reading instruction that would enable them to help children with reading difficulties.

### Performance Indicators and Targets

1. *By 2005, the percentage of all fourth-grade students who will meet basic levels in reading on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) will increase to 70 percent, up from 62 in percent in 1998 (about 300,000 children), and increasing percentages will achieve proficient levels.*
2. *Increasing percentages of teachers of students in kindergarten through third grade in Title I schools will receive ongoing, intensive professional development to enable them to successfully use research-based strategies to effectively teach reading to diverse students, including those who experience difficulties in learning to read and those with disabilities.*

### Our Role

The Department of Education's resources are used to help states, local school districts, and schools improve the teaching and learning of reading. The primary areas of focus are high-poverty children in early childhood programs; at-risk school children in K-12 schools serving concentrations of low-income children; and special populations that experience difficulties in reading, such as students with disabilities and language minority students. The Education Department supports reading instruction through many programs, including Title I, Even Start, the Reading Excellence Program, the Class Size Reduction Program, and the Comprehensive School Reform Development (CSRD) program, and through other programs that serve special populations such as special education, bilingual education, migrant education, and Indian Education. These programs support activities that are critically important to improving the quality of reading instruction including increasing professional development opportunities, upgrading reading curriculum and materials, reducing class sizes, providing additional instructional time, and providing one-on-one assistance for children with reading difficulties.

Through the America Reads Challenge the Department fosters community involvement in reading. The Department also supports a major reading research agenda building on the historic, Department-supported report: *Preventing Reading Difficulties*, which was complemented by the NICHD report on *Teaching Children to Read*.

There is a considerable amount of research-based information about how to teach reading effectively, as demonstrated by the rigorous research syntheses of the National Research Council and the National Institute for Child Health and Human Development. The U.S. Department of Education's major challenge for the next five years is to provide support to states and districts to use this information in training teachers to help students overcome reading difficulties.

## Core Strategies

- **Provide major financial support to continuously improve in-class instruction for children with special needs in reading.**
  - Monitor and evaluate Title I, Even Start, Reading Excellence, Special Education, Class Size Reduction, and Bilingual Education programs to continuously improve the reading instruction they support.
  - Continue major expansion of after-school programs with an emphasis on extending learning time for reading through multiple strategies including reading tutors and encouraging reading through the arts.
  - Strengthen the America Reads initiative, which supports Federal Work Study students who serve as reading tutors, through expanded outreach to institutions of higher education.
  - Support smaller class sizes for early reading instruction through the Class Size Reduction Program and Title I.
- **Encourage states to integrate Federal and state resources to support a comprehensive reading strategy.**
  - Provide states with technical assistance and information on effective reading practices and data collection systems.
  - Disseminate widely information on the progress of states and communities in improving children's reading.
- **Equip teachers and administrators to provide effective reading instruction, emphasizing the findings of the National Research Council, National Reading Panel, and other evidence-based reports through high-quality preparation and ongoing professional growth opportunities.**
  - Disseminate effective reading practices to support professional development through large-scale, Web-based professional development modules.
  - Ensure, through guidance, technical assistance, and widespread dissemination of research findings, that Federally supported professional development meets standards of sustained, intensive, high-quality professional development for reading and language arts.
  - Strengthen teacher preparation in scientifically based reading instruction through Title II of the Higher Education Act (HEA), including monitoring teachers' performance nationally on state licensing exams.
  - Meet the needs of limited English proficient (LEP), special education, and other at-risk populations, the America Reads Office, the Office of Bilingual Education, the Office of Special Education Programs, and others by developing instructional materials on basic knowledge needed by teachers and administrators who teach these children to read.
- v **Promote parent and community involvement.**
  - Encourage the involvement of private-sector organizations in supporting reading interventions through the America Reads Challenge and the Partnership for Family Involvement in Education and develop a range of reading materials with a pedagogical basis for community members to use.

- Provide material and resources that are accessible to the parents of limited English proficient students.
- Support parent involvement by providing technical assistance and effective reading materials. Parent Information Resource Centers provide support to states, districts, and schools to help them remove barriers to parent involvement in their children's education. The “Compact for Reading” and support for materials developed by the National Institute for Literacy give parents effective tools for reading with their children.

■ **Support research and development.**

- Develop an analytic agenda to follow up on the research recommendations of the National Research Council, *Preventing Reading Difficulties* report, especially in the areas of effective interventions for primary-grade students with reading difficulties, appropriate use of instructional technology, and reading strategies for children for whom English is a second language.
- Identify sound strategies for building the knowledge and skills of reading teachers in effective methods of reading instruction.
- Support new research and translations of existing research that lead to the development of effective interventions for reaching and helping at-risk families, who may lack formal education or are non-English speaking, to create a language-rich home environment for their children.

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## Objective 1C: Every eighth-grader masters challenging mathematics, including the foundations of algebra and geometry.

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To be adequately prepared for postsecondary study and promising careers, students need to acquire advanced knowledge in mathematics, science, and technology. U.S. NAEP math scores continue to improve, more U.S. students are taking higher level math courses, and U.S. fourth-graders perform above the international average [Third International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS), 1997, 1998]. At the same time, however, U.S. students perform significantly below the international average by the end of secondary school. Student performance is affected by many different factors. For example, although the curriculum in the United States is broader than in other countries with high-performing students, it lacks depth. Also, many mathematics teachers today lack the appropriate credentials and licensure for the subjects they teach, and many of those who are appropriately certified are under-prepared in their discipline.

### Performance Indicators and Targets

1. *The percentage of all eighth grade students who reach the basic level or above in math on the NAEP will increase to 70% in 2005, as compared to 62% in 1996.*
2. *The average score of American students in relation to the average score on a comparable set of the participating industrialized nations on international mathematics assessments will increase to the median score by 2005.*
3. *The percent of eighth-grade students who demonstrate mastery on the NAEP subscales for algebra and geometry will continually increase.*
4. *By 2005, the number of additional teachers entering the workforce with adequate preparation to teach challenging mathematics to students in secondary school will increase, as measured by a decline of 10 percentage points of out-of-field hires.*
5. *The number of teachers of mathematics completing intensive professional development to enable them to teach challenging mathematics will increase 20 percent each year, as measured by successful participation in summer institutes and school-based inquiry groups.*

### Our Role

The Department of Education's resources are available to states, local school districts, and schools for the purpose of improving teaching, upgrading curriculum, integrating technology and high-quality instructional materials into the classroom, and motivating students to better appreciate how mathematical concepts are applied in today's global workplace. Overall coordination is accomplished through America Counts, a Department-wide mathematics initiative. A variety of programs, including, among others, the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) Title I and Title II programs and the Higher Education Act (HEA) Title II program, provide support for improving the math achievement of students. The Department also works with other Federal agencies, including the National Science Foundation, to strengthen the impact of Federal resources on mathematics education nationwide.

Concerns about accelerating the Nation's mathematics performance have led to recommendations for improvements. For example, in September 2000, the nonpartisan National Commission on Mathematics and Science Teaching for the 21st Century (The John Glenn Commission) announced three goals: (1) Establish an ongoing system to improve the quality of mathematics and science teaching in grades K-12;



(2) Increase significantly the number of mathematics and science teachers and improve the quality of their preparation; and, (3) Improve the working environment and make the teaching profession more attractive for K-12 mathematics and science teachers. To achieve those three goals 14 action strategies are detailed in the Commission's report, *Before It's Too Late*. Implementing the action strategies will require an investment of significant resources, as well as new partnerships with states and business, expanded ongoing learning opportunities for mathematics and science teachers, enhanced collaboration within and between universities to increase the number and quality of graduates in science and mathematics education, and the promotion of research-based effective teaching methods which enhance student achievement, especially the use of up-to-date technology for instruction.

## Core Strategies

### ■ **Implement the findings of the Glenn Commission.**

- In conjunction with other Federal agencies, provide funds to states to: conduct a comprehensive assessment of the needs of mathematics and science teachers, offer summer institutes and promote teacher inquiry groups, and implement comprehensive induction programs for new mathematics and science teachers.
- In conjunction with other Federal agencies, provide funds to: train 15,000 teacher facilitators to work with the state-based summer institutes and school-based inquiry groups, develop an Internet Portal that promotes an ever-expanding knowledge base about effective mathematics and science teaching, establish criteria for identifying exemplary programs for the preparation of mathematics and science teachers, and create 15 Academies that prepare new mathematics teachers from among recent college graduates and people at midcareer.
- Administer a Federal loan forgiveness program to attract college students into science and mathematics teaching each year.
- Administer a scholarship program for high-achieving high school students to study mathematics and science education at designated universities.
- Develop a public campaign to recruit outstanding individuals into the mathematics and science teaching force.
- Provide funds for the Coordinating Council for Mathematics and Science Teaching to facilitate and broker the implementation of The Glenn Commission Action Strategies.

### ■ **Provide Personal Attention and Additional Learning Time for Students.**

- Encourage postsecondary institutions to support mathematics tutoring by providing Federal funds to pay the wages of Work Study students who serve as mathematics tutors to elementary through ninth-grade students.

### ■ **Equip teachers and administrators to provide challenging mathematics through high-quality preparation and ongoing professional development opportunities.**

- Strengthen teacher preparation in mathematics and science through Title II of the Higher Education Act, including monitoring performance on state licensing exams.
- Support teacher professional development to ensure effective implementation of programs for children with unique needs, children with disabilities, language minorities, and children gifted in mathematics.
- In partnership with the National Science Foundation, provide guidance and offer technical assistance, including through Federally supported laboratories and assistance centers, to state- and district-level teams on how to better use Federal, state and local resources to improve mathematics achievement.

- **Support high-quality research to inform best practices of mathematics teaching and learning.**
  - Follow up on the recommendations of recent studies jointly funded by the U.S. Department of Education and the National Science Foundation, and undertaken by the National Academy of Sciences (NAS), on mathematics learning and on calculus, biology, chemistry, and physics Advanced Placement (AP) Programs.
  - Continue to co-fund with NSF the Interagency Education Research Initiative, a \$30-million effort supporting research directed toward understanding how to make substantial improvements in early learning in mathematics and other areas.
  - Provide international benchmarks on the performance of American students in mathematics and science and conduct internal and research studies of effective mathematics and science practices that the U.S. may adapt.
- **Build public understanding of the mathematics that today's students must master.**
  - Support the joint U.S. Department of Education and National Science Foundation national public engagement campaign.
  - Broaden communication methods to engage parents and communities in supporting mathematics learning, including the Partnership for Family Involvement and Compact for Mathematics.

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## Objective 1D: Middle schools and high schools help all students make successful transitions to college and careers.

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Objective 1D focuses on helping middle and high schools make changes in teaching and learning so that all students can achieve to high academic and technical standards and make successful transitions to college and careers. There has been significant progress in getting more students of all backgrounds to take the tougher academic courses, including rigorous mathematics and sciences and advanced placement subjects. NAEP results in reading and math for 13- and 17-year-olds are slightly higher today than they were in the 1970s.

However, too many students are not acquiring the educational skills needed to succeed in the knowledge-based economy of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, as evidenced by the high percentage of high school students who fail challenging high stakes exit exams or who require remedial education in college; the disproportionately high percentage of Hispanic youth who fail to complete high school; international comparisons of math and science achievement indicating that U.S. 12<sup>th</sup>-graders score below students in most other developed nations; and the great difficulty reported by employers in recruiting recent high school graduates with academic skills needed in technically demanding occupations. Although college enrollment rates have increased, a significant gap in college attendance and completion remains between white and other racial/ethnic groups.

### Performance Indicators and Targets

1. *By Fall 2005, 60 percent (up from 45 percent in 1998) of high school graduates, including vocational concentrators and students in high-poverty schools will complete core academic curriculum requirements.*
2. *By 2005, 15 percent of high school students, including those attending high-poverty schools, will complete Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate courses (up from 10.5 percent in 1999),*
3. *By 2005, high school graduation rates will reverse their recent decline and increase 3 percent (up from 70.6 percent in 1999) both overall and for students from low-income families.*
4. *By Fall 2005, 90 percent (up from 87 percent in 1996) of high school graduates, including vocational concentrators, students from low-income families, and students with disabilities will make a successful transition into postsecondary education or employment, including the military.*
5. *An increasing percentage of high school students (from 41 percent studying modern foreign languages in 1995) will study and demonstrate proficiency in a foreign language (bi-literacy).*

### Our Role

The Department provides support for middle and high school reform and improvement both through vocational education programs, which increasingly focus on both academic and technical skills preparation for success in college or careers, and development and implementation of reform models through the Comprehensive School Reform Demonstration (CSRD) program and through the Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI) grant programs. The Department of Education also supports postsecondary preparation programs such as TRIO's Upward Bound and Talent Search, and Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP). These programs use varying approaches to provide low-income youth with academic support, mentoring, and counseling to

improve students' preparation for college. Other programs are designed to facilitate successful transitions for students with disabilities.

## Core Strategies

### ■ **Commitment of Resources**

- Link major financial support (currently more than \$2 billion) to states, school districts and postsecondary institutions to providing research-based programs to better prepare young people, particularly those from economically disadvantaged backgrounds, for college and careers.

### ■ **Middle and High School Reform**

- Strengthen the Smaller Learning Communities program to help large, primarily high-poverty high schools. Current research suggests that small schools can reduce the disengagement and isolation that breeds violence, and enhance student attendance and achievement by creating a positive learning environment.
- Encourage states and districts to utilize basic Vocational Education, IDEA, and ESEA grant funds for secondary school reforms including research-based models such as High Schools That Work, career academies, and Tech-Prep.

### ■ **Improved Accountability Systems**

- Work with state agencies and postsecondary grantees to improve the quality, efficiency and effectiveness of their performance reporting and accountability systems, including the capacity to report results for special populations.
- Analyze data on the participation levels of special populations and provide technical assistance or enforcement activities as needed to ensure access to higher education for those populations.
- Build new pilot projects to reduce grantee-reporting burden and improve the quality of performance information.
- Test the use of alternative data sources such as student financial aid applicant data files to better monitor the educational outcomes of TRIO program participants.
- Expand the Integrated Performance Benchmarking System to include Vocational Education; this experiment is intended to provide real-time information through "data harvesting" and eliminate duplicative reporting requirements from different programs.

### ■ **Strengthen Fluency in a Second Language (bi-literacy)**

- Expand Federal support for second language learning—both for limited English proficient students and for English-speaking students learning a foreign language—an increasingly important skill for Americans to succeed within the global society of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.
- Examine ways to use technology, including the Internet, as a way to support English and foreign-language instruction to help American children become truly fluent in more than one language.
- Support increasing numbers of dual immersion school programs.

### ■ **Improving Links Between Secondary and Postsecondary Education**

- Through the Secretary's Commission on the High School Senior Year, headed by Governor Paul Patton, issue recommendations in 2001 on ways to improve high schools and prepare students for their transition to postsecondary education.

- Work with states and postsecondary coordinating boards to better align high school graduation standards and assessments with skills needed to succeed in postsecondary education. Expectations for what students should know and be able to do when they leave high school differ from expectations for students entering postsecondary education. This results in conflicting standards for students, high levels of college remediation and low college completion rates.
- Support education programs that combine at least two years of high school and two years of college to better prepare students with the academic and technical skills to pursue careers in "high tech" fields.
- Expand the Education Department's outreach campaign to inform middle and high school students and their families about the academic requirements needed to attend a postsecondary education, costs of attendance, and availability of financial aid.

■ **Strengthen Early Intervention Programs**

- Work with states and postsecondary governing boards to coordinate and strengthen programs such as GEAR UP, TRIO's Upward Bound and Talent Search Programs, Community Technology Centers, and 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers to increase the participation and success of traditionally underserved youth.

■ **Strengthen Transition Services for Students With Disabilities**

- Identify and disseminate information describing effective practices, model cooperative agreements, and policies regarding school-to-work programs and transition services for students with disabilities, including those operated by Tribal Vocational Rehabilitation agencies.
- Focus Federal monitoring activities on transition activities that improve results for youth with disabilities by examining states' monitoring and technical assistance practices around transition services. A review of statements of needed transition services and the process for determining needed transition services will be a major focus of record reviews and interviews with district personnel. Also, as part of Federal monitoring, identify promising practices and post them on the National Monitoring and Promising Practices Web site.

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## Goal 1. External Factors and Management Challenges

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**External Factor: Curriculum and pedagogy are primarily state and local decisions.**

**Response:** While the Federal government has no direct control over curriculum, it provides support to allow states and communities to focus on and improve curriculum adequacy. For example, Federally supported research on best pedagogical practices, such as the National Research Council report on *Preventing Reading Difficulties in Young Children*, has been extraordinarily influential in focusing attention on how much is known about helping children learn to read. Similar reports are forthcoming in early childhood education and mathematics. The Education Department is actively disseminating this information through conferences, Internet sites, and technical assistance mechanisms such as the Comprehensive Assistance Centers and Regional Education Laboratories. States, districts, and schools need information that will help them adopt good education practices, understand the evidence, and support their efforts to change.

**External Factor: Teachers often have inadequate qualifications and knowledge, especially in programs serving at-risk students.**

**Response:** Inadequate teacher and principal qualifications and lack of knowledge of fundamental pedagogy and instructional content can be significant barriers to effective reforms. Staff weaknesses are particularly severe for early childhood projects, which typically lack formal qualification standards and suffer from low pay. This situation does not have to be accepted. Other nations with internationally recognized preschool programs, including France and Italy, generally have much better trained preschool teachers. The National Research Council report, *Eager to Learn*, calls for higher standards in early childhood education.

New higher education legislation is strengthening preservice education and requiring new reporting on student pass rates on state licensing exams. ESEA is supporting stronger alignment of entry teacher qualifications and professional development with state content standards. The Department's proposal to reauthorize the Elementary and Secondary Education Act would substantially expand and strengthen professional development and teacher quality at all levels from preschool through grade 12.

**External Factor: Language minority and special-need students pose special challenges.**

**Response:** Educating language minority students poses special challenges, including the lack of availability of trained and certified bilingual education and ESL teachers and appropriate teaching materials, as well as the varying educational attainment level of many students. Although no simple solutions exist, a range of strategies can help address these special needs. The Department is ensuring inclusion of language minority students in state assessments so that their special needs are recognized and addressed. Internationally, the Department is working with Mexico, Spain, and other countries on exchanges of teachers and developing effective practices for educating Hispanic students in the United States. Similar efforts are underway to improve instruction, assessment, and learning for Asian English language learners under the auspices of the President's Asian American and Pacific Islander Initiative. The Department's major K-12 interventions, including Title I, target substantial resources to support the educational opportunities of language minority students. The Department is also supporting increased translation of information and education materials into non-English languages, particularly Spanish, because of the large Spanish-speaking community. The Department has worked with the California Department of Education on the development of a Spanish language version of its Compact for Reading, and California will be training over 20,000 teachers in its use. The Internet has the potential also to

provide real-time, individualized access to ESL training and language courses, and exploratory work is underway to examine the best uses of this potentially powerful new medium. In addition, the new small schools initiative can particularly address the need for smaller high schools and the special attention that language minority youth need to reduce extremely high school dropout rates.

The focus on high standards for all students has focused education on attaining higher quality outcomes for students with learning and physical disabilities in addition to ensuring their access to educational opportunities. Curricula and instruction are being geared towards the post-school outcomes that students with disabilities achieve by the time they graduate from high school. Higher standards are attained through access to the general education curriculum, higher teacher and parental expectations, and inclusion of students with disabilities in large-scale assessments with appropriate accommodations. Students with disabilities continue to have higher levels of high school dropout rates and higher unemployment rates than their peers without disabilities. Challenges are exacerbated by extreme shortages of qualified special education teachers, particularly in urban and high-poverty areas.

**External Factor: Parents are critical to their children's success in school, but may not realize their importance or adequately encourage their children's learning.**

**Response:** Parents want the best for their children, but many need help to act on that goal. The Department is helping parents use research knowledge effectively to increase their children's learning. The America Reads initiative provides parents with videos and home-learning materials. The Department's Partnership for Family Involvement is able to enlist its 6,000 family, school, employer and religious organizations to work within communities to involve families. The Title I parent involvement provisions require joint school-family compacts in all Title I schools and are supported by the Department's research-based compact for reading materials.

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## Goal 1. Strengthening Coordination

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The Department of Education recognizes that, in addition to its oversight of the many Department programs described above, assistance and support from other Federal agencies is also important. We work with other agencies in the following major activities:

- **Interagency research collaboration and sharing of research-based knowledge:** The Department has been involved in the interagency Early Childhood Research Working Group convened by the National Institute on Early Childhood Development and Education to share research-based information about young children and their families and to provide opportunities for interagency research collaboration. The Education Department has used the findings from this exchange, such as the information provided by the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD) on language and literacy development, to improve programs across Federal departments. This exchange has facilitated collaboration by making Federal legislation among programs compatible and encouraging interagency agreements at the state level. It has also helped the Education Department and its partner agencies examine how collaborative efforts are evolving at the state and local levels. The Education Department also coordinates return-to-work research with the Department of Labor and the Social Security Administration.
- **HHS-ED Joint task forces on early childhood education:** The Department of Education and the Department of Health and Human Services have formed a joint task force to increase collaboration and coordination of services to children in early childhood. As part of this initiative, the two agencies will facilitate collaboration of HHS- and ED-funded activities for reading and early childhood development. The Department of Health and Human Services and the Department of Education will jointly disseminate reading publications on early childhood and will coordinate GPRA reporting.
- **Interagency training:** The Education Department collaborates with the U.S. Army and the Bureau of Indian Affairs to improve extended learning programs in reading. The Education Department will continue to help train Army staff directors to use America Reads Challenge Read\*Write\*Now! interventions and materials in the Army's extended learning programs. The Department of Education will work with the Department of the Interior's Bureau of Indian Affairs schools to encourage extended learning in reading programs that support the America Reads Challenge.
- v **Children of families with special needs:** The Education Department coordinates efforts with the Departments of Health and Human Services and Labor to ensure that children from families moving from welfare to work and others with special needs (e.g., migratory workers and homeless families) receive opportunities to participate fully in educational activities. Through Impact Aid, the Education Department works with the Defense Department to provide assistance to schools educating children in military families.
- v **Hispanic Education Action Plan:** The Education Department's efforts to improve educational attainment and outcomes for Latino students are demonstrated through the President's Hispanic Education Action plan. As the lead agency in this effort, the Education Department has committed to improve the provision of services to Latino and limited-English proficient students through increasing accountability, ensuring inclusion of this population in state assessments, and expanding resources such as technical assistance to reach under-served communities.
- v **President's Asian American and Pacific Islander Initiative:** The Education Department is committed to improve the provision of services to Asian and Pacific Islander students through



increasing accountability, ensuring inclusion of this population in state assessments, and expanding resources such as technical assistance to reach under-served communities.

- v **White House Indian Education Initiative.** The Education Department coordinates across agencies to strengthen programs and provide integrated and comprehensive services to improve school services and student outcomes for Indian students.
- v **Juvenile justice:** Coordinate with the Department of Justice in supporting and disseminating improved state-level strategies for the collection, analysis, and use of data regarding youth who are placed in juvenile facilities.
- **Improving services for children and young adults with disabilities:** Continue to collaborate with the Public Health Service in providing technical assistance and disseminating information to improve mental health service delivery in schools. In addition, the Department of Education and the Social Security Administration co-chair conferences focusing on enhancing work opportunities for individuals with disabilities.

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## Goal 1. Evaluation Highlights

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Highlights of evaluations conducted in order to assess our progress toward meeting the four major objectives in Goal 1.

**Objective 1A: All children enter school ready to learn through receiving high quality and developmentally appropriate preschool experiences.**

*National Evaluation of the Even Start Family Literacy Program:* This study will evaluate the performance and impact of Even Start projects through a random assignment study of 20 grantees and data on services and performance from all Even Start Projects.

*Development of Coordinated Title I, Even Start, and Head Start program performance and information system:* This study will design a program performance and information system for Title I and Even Start early childhood activities that is based on the FACES longitudinal survey instrumentation used by Head Start. This instrumentation will provide key outcome, program quality, and home indicators for these programs starting with Fall 2001 school year.

*Study of Even Start State Implementation:* This study will examine the quality and effectiveness of Even Start and Title I preschool projects on children's literacy. The study will be coordinated with HHS. The Education Department will administer the Family and Child Experiences Survey (FACES) used by HHS for their Program Performance Measures Initiative.

**Objective 1B: Every child reads well and independently by the end of the third grade.**

**Objective 1C: Every eighth-grader acquires challenging mathematics including the foundations of algebra and geometry.**

*Title I State Performance Report:* This study will collect and analyze annual state data on student achievement, Title I participation, and staffing.

*Longitudinal Evaluation of School Change and Performance:* This study examines the impact of standards-based reform on student achievement in high-poverty elementary schools. The study will also look at the impact of reform policies on accountability and instructional practices in reading and mathematics.

*REA School Implementation and Impact Evaluation* is a longitudinal study to examine the quality of implementation of REA, the extent to which schools that participate in REA are improving the quality of reading instruction and, the impact of REA on student outcomes. This study will collect both survey data on a nationally representative sample of REA schools and more in-depth qualitative and impact data on a subsample of 75 schools.

*Effects of REA Model on Children's Reading Growth* is a longitudinal, experimental evaluation of a cohort of kindergartners in well-implemented REA schools compared to a cohort in similar Title I schools to determine the impact of the REA model on student achievement. The study is designed to examine the impact on disadvantaged students overall, and on the most disadvantaged students, who typically have flat growth curves.

*Longitudinal Evaluation of the Effectiveness of Comprehensive School Reform Models and Title I School-wide Interventions:* This evaluation will examine the impact of promising school-wide educational

interventions on student achievement in high poverty schools. The study will include a sample of 75 high-poverty, Title I elementary schools with schoolwide programs, including schools implementing instructionally focused models funded through the Comprehensive School Reform Demonstration Program (CSRDP).

*National Assessment of Title I: New Data and Findings:* This report will provide an update of the report to Congress submitted in 1999. New data on student achievement for the Title I target population from NAEP and state assessments will be included. New findings on the impact of standards-based reform on student achievement in high-poverty schools will also be added.

**Objective 1D: Middle schools and high schools help all students make successful transitions to college and careers.**

*Study of Academic Achievement for Secondary Schools Students* examines strategies for raising the academic achievement of secondary schools students and examines the feasibility of rigorous impact studies of promising instructional practices in reading and mathematics for secondary school learners.

*Evaluation of Upward Bound Program:* Upward Bound is designed to complement student financial aid by providing economically disadvantaged high school students with supplemental services (counseling, tutoring, special instruction, etc). Using an experimental longitudinal design, this study follows a sample of 3000 students to assess the effects of TRIO's Upward Bound program on college access and performance of disadvantaged secondary school students.

*Evaluation of Talent Search Program:* Using existing state and federal data, this study examines the impact of Talent Search participation on students' college enrollment and access to student financial aid.

*Evaluation of Gear-Up Program:* Gaining Early Awareness Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP) is a middle and high school intervention aimed at increasing the enrollment rate of disadvantaged students in postsecondary education. The evaluation follows a sample of project participants and matched non-participants beginning in the seventh grade to assess the effects implementing GEAR-UP on secondary and postsecondary educational outcomes.

*Evaluation of High Schools That Work, Tech-Prep, Career Academies and Youth Apprenticeship:* Using existing educational and unemployment insurance data from three states, this study examines the impact of these highly regarded high school programs on students' academic course-taking, postsecondary enrollment and persistence, and initial earnings.

*Evaluation of School-to-Work Implementation:* School-to-Work, or school-to-careers as it is often called, attempts to add meaningful context from the world of work to better engage the interest and intellect of students and help them learn more effectively. The School-to-Work Opportunities Act sunsets in 2001. Through case studies, surveys of local partnerships and students, the study collects information on a wide range of issues including student access and participation in school-to-work, progress in establishing school-to-work systems, and changes in student outcomes.